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ABSTRACT

This practicum was conducted to: (1) study the attitudes of librarians presently supervising Library Technical Assistant (LTA) graduates from Mercer County Community College (MCCC) in New Jersey; (2) survey employment prospects for LTAs in Mercer and adjacent counties, and compare the results with those of a 1969 survey; and (3) evaluate present curricula of the LTA Program. Graduates, supervising librarians, and 164 of 250 randomly selected libraries in Mercer and adjacent counties responded to three questionnaires. Eighty-five percent of the supervising librarians supported the need for formally trained LTAs and noted the excellent performance of MCCC graduates. Fewer libraries wanted to hire additional LTAs, decreasing from 57 in 1969 to 15 in 1976. Librarians and graduates highly rated the present curricula. The study concluded that although the LTA status is accepted locally, the job market is uncertain. Recommendations included: (1) establishing job placement services; (2) increasing enrollment by encouraging all students to take a portion of the program as an elective or minor; (3) encouraging LTA students to take audiovisual equipment and computer courses as electives; and (4) a statewide campaign for an LTA job classification in the New Jersey Civil Service. Questionnaires and comments are appended. (KP)

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A STUDY OF THE STATUS OF THE LIBRARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANT IN THE LIBRARY PROFESSION

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

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THE SOCIETAL FACTORS MODULE

by

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A PRACTICUM PRESENTED TO NOVA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This practicum was conducted to study the attitudes of local librarians about Mercer County Community College Library Technical Program graduates. To assess employment prospects for those graduates in this area, two-hundred fifty questionnaires were sent out to local libraries. One hundred and sixty-four responses were received. The survey results were compared to a similar survey done in 1969.

Based on the results of the surveys, new strategies were recommended to strengthen the Library Technical Assistant Program at Mercer County Community College.

Data are included as appendixes.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sponsored by the people of Mercer County, New Jersey through their Board of Chosen Freeholders, Mercer County Community College (MCCC) is a typical, publicly supported, two-year coeducational institution.

The college was established in 1967 to provide equal educational opportunity for all Mercer County residents by offering them at least two years of study beyond high school. The total student enrollment in 1975-76 reached 3,156 full-time and 4,118 part-time students.

Today, the college offers more than fifty-two programs, including thirteen programs and thirty-nine career programs designed to accommodate the general interests and occupational needs of residents who want to continue or resume their education at the college level.

The Library Technical Assistant (LTA) Program was first offered in 1970 as one of the career programs. In 1973 only one student graduated from this program. Twelve students graduated in 1974; five students in 1975; and ten students in 1976. In total, twenty-eight students were graduated from this program during its first six years. Presently, forty-five students are enrolled in the program. This sharp increase in enrollment indicates increasing interest in this type of career.

As library budgets tighten and the availability of librarians surpasses the number of available jobs, the training and the status of the LTA becomes increasingly controversial in the library profession.

Therefore, the purpose of this practicum was threefold: (1) to study the attitudes of librarians who are presently supervising the twenty-eight LTA graduates, (2) to survey employment prospects for LTA's in Mercer and adjacent counties and to compare the results with a similar survey done in November 1969 by the College, and (3) to evaluate the present curricula of the LTA program at Mercer County Community College.

II. BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The manpower shortage in the 1960's prompted the development of many new job titles. Because of the critical shortage of skilled librarians, the 1964 American Library Association Conference was devoted largely to a discussion and evaluation of this problem. A recurring consensus at the Conference was that the shortage could be diminished if the professional librarians could devote themselves to professional tasks and if they could shift tasks of lesser difficulty to a paraprofessional category.[1] It was recommended strongly that a paraprofessional staff category be established and that this category should be between the clerk and professional librarian.

Martinson's study on the same subject in 1965 was the first major survey of training programs for library technicians. The survey identified twenty-four institutions which offered training for library technicians and found that the largest identifiable group of students were mature women who were returning to the labor force for various reasons.[2]

In 1966, the United States Civil Service Commission, for the first time, officially recognized the library technician as a new job classification.[3]

In 1967, the Council on Library Technology was established to exchange ideas, to develop and monitor a core curriculum,

and to discuss problems of standards, placement, recruiting, employment, salaries and other vital areas of interest for the LTA's.[4]

In 1970, many library technical assistants attended the fourth annual meeting of the Council and expressed their own views of their careers. They described their work as supportive and pointed out that they worked in cooperation with and were responsible to professional librarians.[5]

In 1970, the American Library Association officially adopted the category of Library Technical Assistant in its Library Education and Manpower Statement.[6] And in 1971, the Library Education Division issued its revised Criteria for Programs to Prepare Library Media Technical Assistants.[7]

According to the 1975 Bowker Annual, in the 1972-1973 academic year, thirty-two institutions reported awarding two hundred forty-two two-year degrees and twenty-one institutions reported awarding twenty LTA certificates. The same source indicates that twelve institutions reported awarding one hundred eighteen LTA certificates in 1967.[8] Most of these programs have been developed in response to local conditions.[9]

In 1972, Dorsett surveyed library technical assistant programs and employment. She concluded that the majority of the library directors who responded to the questionnaire reported a need for this middle-level library staff member.[10]

Dorsett also reported that formally trained LTA's were employed in 27.03 per cent of the public libraries, in 17.14 per cent of the college and university libraries, and in 21.21 per cent of the special libraries surveyed.[11]

A summary of pertinent literature reveals, however, that the formally trained library technical assistant concept has not been so readily accepted by the library profession. Those who argue for LTA acceptance believe:

(1) formal training reduces the need for expensive on-the-job training;

(2) professional librarians will be freed from routine and time consuming clerical duties to be able to concentrate on the needs of the user and initiate new and better methods of increasing service;

(3) middle-level career designation provides job opportunities for members of ethnic minorities and disadvantaged social groups and for other members of various communities who are geographically immobile.

Those who argue against the concept assert:

(1) job classifications for this category do not exist in many libraries;

(2) LTA's wages are lower than those of the professional and these LTA's may be used to replace professionals;

(3) the quality of formal training offered in two-year colleges is not adequate and in-service training in the employing library is more efficient than formal training in two-year colleges.

Although the American Library Association has officially recognized the library technical assistant,[12] the preceding debate has continued since the inception of this program. Opponents of the LTA classification can be easily found among librarians. Therefore, it is very important to know what the present status of the LTA is in the local library field. Both the faculty and students of the LTA program at Mercer County Community College will benefit from this finding.

The tight job market is affecting not only the librarians but also the LTA's. To keep the training program at its present level, it is vital to have accurate information concerning the potential job market in Mercer County area.

In today's changing society, to meet the needs of concerned individuals, all curricula must be changed accordingly. The LTA program is not an exception; therefore, the contents of the curriculum should be evaluated by prospective employers as well as graduates.

III. PROCEDURES

The study was conducted basically in three parts, which were designed with the cooperation of Prof. Frank Butorac, Chairperson of the Library Services Department at Mercer County Community College.

The first part entailed a follow-up study of the total LTA program graduates to acquire basic data about the graduates. A preliminary draft of a questionnaire with a cover letter was developed in February 1976 and reviewed by a group of experts in March, 1976. The list of these individuals, who were familiar with the LTA program at Mercer County Community College, is included in Appendix A. Appraisals and recommendations of the group were used in the refinement of the questionnaire and for verification of content validity. In August 1976, the revised questionnaire with a cover letter was sent to all twenty-eight graduates (See Appendixes B and C). Twenty-five graduates responded after several telephone calls were made. The remaining three graduates had moved away and had left no forwarding addresses.

In September, 1976, as a second part of the study to detect the attitudes of librarians who were working with these graduates, another questionnaire was designed. A preliminary draft of this questionnaire with a cover letter

was also submitted to the same group of experts for modification and expansion. The revised questionnaire and a cover letter were sent to twenty-five librarians working with Mercer graduates (see Appendixes D and E). Names and addresses of these librarians were obtained from the responses of the first questionnaire. Of this group, twenty librarians responded.

As the third and last part of the study, an attempt was made to study the potential job market for LTA program graduates in Mercer and adjacent counties and possible revision of the LTA curriculum to meet the needs of employing libraries. A questionnaire, used in a 1969 survey, was modified and utilized again for the purpose of comparison (See Appendixis F and G). The names of the libraries were chosen from a recent American Library Directory[13] and other available reference sources.[14]

The questionnaire and a cover letter were sent to randomly selected two hundred fifty school , public, special, college and university libraries located in Mercer, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Burlington Counties in the State of New Jersey. One hundred sixty-four libraries returned the questionnaire.

TABLE I

Distribution of the Third Questionnaire by the Type of Library

Libraries	Quest.sent	Quest.received	% of response
School	50	21	42.0
Public	75	44	58.6
Special	90	67	74.4
College and University	35	32	91.4
Total	250	164	65.6

IV. RESULTS

According to the graduate survey (See Appendix C), 32.14 per cent of LTA graduates were working full-time, and 7.14 per cent of them were working part-time. Thirty-nine point three per cent of them were still looking for jobs as of the early part of August, 1976. The majority of those graduates who were looking for jobs were 1976 June graduates.

TABLE 2

Present Working Status of Twenty-eight Graduates

Divided	Numbers	%
Working full-time	9	32.14
Working part-time	2	7.14
Not working (seeking position)	11	39.3
Not working (not seeking position)	3	10.71
No response	3	10.71
Total	28	100 %

Two persons under "not working (not seeking position)" were identified as students pursuing baccalaureates in a nearby four-year college, and one graduate in this category states she was temporarily disabled.

TABLE 3

Length of Present Employment

Divided	Numbers	%
Before entering the program at MCCC	2	22
Before graduation from MCCC	2	22
After graduation	5	56
Total	9	100 %

Two persons who began working for their present employers before entering the program stated that completion of their programs resulted in additional compensation or upgrading in position. The two persons who stated that they had held their present jobs before graduation from MCCC were working other than in the library field. All comments made by those participating graduates are included in Appendix H.

Eighty-five per cent of librarians who responded to the second questionnaire (see Appendix E), believed that there would be a steady need for formally trained library technical assistants in their libraries. The remaining fifteen per cent of the librarians think that the formally trained LTA's are not suitable for their libraries mainly because their libraries are very specialized and unique, so they prefer to train their own library personnel. Only five per cent of them opposed the formal training of LTA's because there would be no adequate job market for them. One librarian stated:

> LTA's will have great difficulty finding employment in the present job market. Many professionally trained librarians are either graduating from library schools with no job prospects or are being laid off from their present jobs. If the economy improves, and libraries once again receive adequate funding, this situation will improve, but until that time there may be very few jobs available for LTA's, no matter how good their training may be.

Ninety-five per cent of the librarians who returned the second questionnaire (See Appendix E) indicated that formally trained LTA's should have higher salaries than clerical staff. Eighty-five per cent of the same librarians stated that the work performance of MCCC graduates was excellent, and their training received at MCCC was excellent.

Seventy-five per cent of the Mercer graduates wanted to have in depth training in one or more special areas. On

the contrary, sixty per cent of library directors and librarians prefer a broad range of training in library activities.

The following tables summarize what those trained LTA's were doing on their jobs. Tnese duties were mostly identified by their immediate supervisors.

TABLE 4

The Duties Performed by LTA's;
Circulation Procedures

No. of Libraries	Duties
20	Registering borrowers
20	Charging and discharging books
20	Care of shelves, files, and equipment
16	Overdues and fines
15	Explaining lending rules
15	Reserving books for users
12	Keeping records
7	Other (In charge of circulation desk)

TABLE 5

The Duties performed by LTA's
Acquisition Procedures

No. of Libraries	Duties
15	Checking lists
2	Ordering publications (Exclusive of selection)
2	Keeping records

TABLE 6

The Duties Performed by LTA's;
Technical Services

No. of Libraries	Duties
20	Mechanical preparation of library materials
20	Physical upkeeping of library materials
15	Processing added copies and new editions
15	Filing
10	Ordering cards
10	Physical maintenance of catalog

TABLE 7

The Duties Performed by LTA's;
Information Services

No. of Libraries	Duties
14	Answering directional or factual questions involving use of basic reference tools
12	Locating simple bibliographical information

TABLE 8

The Duties Performed by LTA's;
A.V. Services

No. of Libraries	Duties
15	Assists in the use of special equipment such as microfilm readers, copying machines, and other A.V. equipment
12	Operates A.V. equipment
2	Simple maintenance of A.V. equipment

No single librarian who participated in this study opposed the LTA program because it provides a cheap substitute for the professional librarian. Only six public libraries indicated that they could not employ MCCC graduates because they did not have proper civil service job classifications.

However, the major group opposed to the LTA program included the fifteen per cent mentioned earlier. Their main argument was that their in-service training is much better for their library. They were mostly technically oriented small libraries.

The following tables are summaries of the third survey (See Appendix G).

TABLE 9

Would You Hire LTA's if Monies Were Available?

Types of Libraries / Answers	Public	School	Special	Coll/Univ	Total
Yes	30	19	42	25	116
No	10	2	16	4	32
Don't Know	4		9	3	16

TABLE 10

If Yes, Are You Able to Employ LTA's At This Time?

Types of Libraries	Public	School	Special	Coll/Univ	Total
Numbers Able to Employ	2	4	6	3	15

TABLE 11

If Yes, What Salary Would You Pay Them?

Types of Libraries	Public	School	Special	Coll/Univ
Per Hour	$2.30-$4.00	-	-	-
Per Year	$6,500-$11,246	$6,225-$10,500	$5,400-$10,500	$5,000-$11,500

TABLE 12

Would Completion of the Curriculum Result in Additional Compensation or Upgrading in Position for Present Members of Your Staff?

Types of Libraries	Public	School	Special	Coll/Univ	Total
Yes	11	6	20	12	49
No	30	11	33	18	92

TABLE 13

Which Would You Prefer in Training of LTA's ?

Types of Libraries	Public	School	Special	Coll/Univ	Total
Broad	18	18	46	20	102
In Depth	19	2	12	7	40

TABLE 14

What Courses Should Be Added to Enrich the Curriculum and Make the Graduates More Employable ?

Types of Libraries / Desired Courses	Public	School	Special	Coll/Univ	Total
Foreign Languages	2	-	10	4	16
Computer	7	2	30	10	49
A.V.Equipment	31	17	23	20	91
Instructional Television	6	7	3	4	20
Production of Instructional Materials	4	16	5	12	37
Photography	8	4	3	4	19
Cinema	4	3	4	2	13
Children's Lit	12	6	2	2	22
Graphic	18	8	6	12	44
Mass Media	7	-	4	3	14

TABLE 15

Number of Libraries that May Hire LTA's

Comparison of the 1969 and 1976 Surveys

	1969 Survey	1976 Survey	# decr	% decr
Would you hire LTA's if monies were available ?	169	116	-53	-31.45%
Are you able to employ LTA's at this time ?	57	15	-42	-73.64%

Of the fifteen libraries in the 1976 survey that wanted to hire LTA's at that time, there were two public libraries, four school libraries, six special libraries and three college and university libraries. Fifty-seven libraries that wanted to hire LTA's in the 1969 survey[15] included thirty-four school libraries, seven public libraries, eleven special libraries and five college and university libraries.

The comparison of these two surveys clearly indicates that a decrease in the job market for formally trained LTA's is imminent.

Present LTA curricula were evaluated highly by librarians as well as graduates, however, subjects about computer and audio-visual equipment were mostly recommended for additional courses. There appears to be no need to revise the curriculum.

Garoogian stated that MCCC LTA program was the only one in the nation which met American Library Association's Criteria for Programs to Prepare Library/Media Technical Assistants as defined in her study.[16]

Many participants of those three surveys wrote in many valuable and interesting comments in addition to their "yes" and "no" answers. These comments were included in Appendixes I through L. To keep their originality, no editing or re-arrangements were made. The comments were listed as they appeared on the questionnaires.

In conclusion, it is clear that the status of LTA's is getting concrete and is accepted widely in the library profession, at least locally. However, the uncertain job market for LTA's is the main problem faced by Mercer graduates. Furthermore, there was no evidence that the creation of LTA's influenced today's tight job market for librarians.

V. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to expand the discussion of the results found from the study and to identify significant implications. A set of recommendations is provided for a possible course of action in pursuing this type of investigation.

To provide for a high quality of instruction and to maintain a healthy LTA program, a comprehensive evaluation of the program had been long overdue. Since the LTA program at MCCC was fairly new, it was considered important to survey its twenty-eight graduates to determine any impact the LTA program may have. Because the success of these graduates in their jobs directly reflected the success of the program, the first part of the study was devoted to answering the following questions: What was the working status of each of the twenty-eight graduates? If they were working, what were their working performances? What were the attitudes of librarians who actually supervised these graduates? Secondly, the study dealt with the job market in this field. A tight job market means more unemployed graduates and less students enrolling in the LTA program. Considering the market at the time, how many openings in libraries were available locally compared

to those reported a few years ago ?
What might be done to increase potential employment for the graduates? Lastly, the study attempted to evaluate the LTA program curriculum. What did these graduates and their employers think about the MCCC LTA curriculum? Should the curriculum be revised to make the graduates more employable?

Table 2 of the study indicated that nine (32 per cent) out of twenty-eight graduates were working full-time, two (7 per cent) were working part-time, and eleven (39 per cent) were still looking for jobs when this survey was conducted. Even though the majority of these job seekers were recent graduates, the thirty-nine per cent indicated the existence of severe job situation locally. Yet, Table 15 indicated that there were fifteen jobs available at that time locally. Since the study did not cover whether those eleven job seekers knew about the fifteen open positions, it seemed evident that a coordinated placement service could provide a link between jobs and workers.

The attitudes of librarians who were supervising working LTA graduates at that time appeared to favor LTA's. It was pointed out many times that MCCC LTA graduates were excellent in performing their duties in their jobs. Eighty-five per

cent of librarians who responded to the questionnaires indicated that there would be a continuing need for formally-trained LTA's in their libraries. Although a few librarians did not favor LTA programs at any formal institutions, no one complained about MCCC LTA program graduates. Thus, it seems that the MCCC curriculum is well designed and meets the American Library Association's standards for the LTA program as Garoogian stated.[17]

There was also clear evidence that the job market of LTA's has declined steadily. Table 15 indicated that the available positions were reduced from fifty-seven in 1969 to fifteen in 1976. During this seven-year period, 73.69 per cent of available jobs diminished. However, most librarians believe that formally-trained LTA's should get paid more than other clerical staff. Until the economy improves and libraries once again receive adequate funding, there will continue to be a declining enrollment problem.

A declining job market will mean less students in the program unless alternative sources of enrollment are found for the program. An alternative source of enrollment must be found to keep the present pace. Many students in the program still may believe that jobs are available. Whatever happens, the college should not drop the program, regardless of the availability of jobs or decline of student enrollment,

because the potential need of the LTA program has not been changed since its inception.

Table 14 indicated that audio-visual equipment and data-processing courses were mostly recommended for additional credits. There was no evidence that the whole curriculum should be revised. Table 13 indicated that most employers wanted their employees to require broad ranges of training in library activities, while most LTA graduates recommended in-depth training in one or more specialities. This conflicting view seemed very natural, because most library employers usually expect a wide-range background from their new employees, while new employees usually wish to know more about the specifics of any particular job he or she was assigned.

The Federal Civil Service already has made provision for the library technical assistants in its GS1411 series. Yet, the State of New Jersey does not have LTA job classification in the State Civil Service. A few public library directors stated that they could not hire LTA's because there was no such classification in the State Civil Service. This fact presents a severe problem for those graduates who do not intend to move out of this area. As a matter of fact, the majority of recent LTA graduates are women who wish to return to work after their families are raised.

Based on the data and observations presented in this study, the following recommendations were made to the chairperson of the Library Department:

(1) placement services should be provided for LTA graduates to provide current job information;

(2) faculty who teach LTA program classes, should inform their students about local LTA job situation so that students in the program can plan their future accordingly;

(3) to increase enrollment and/or to find an alternative source of enrollment for the program, all students should be encouraged to take a portion of LTA program as elective or as minor;

(4) to train more employable graduates LTA program students should be encouraged to take audio-visual equipment and computer courses as electives;

(5) to create a new LTA job classification in New Jersey Civil Service the library department should initiate a statewide campaign.

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APPENDIX A

The List of Individuals Consulted

1. Prof. Frank G. Butorac
   Coordinator, LTA Program

2. Mr. Robert C. Jones
   Reference Librarian, at MCCC

3. Mrs. Emily Mucklow
   Student, LTA Program

4. Mr. James F. McCoy
   Former LTA program Coodinator

APPENDIX B

MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

P.O. BOX B
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08690 TELEPHONE: (609) 586-4800 1200 OLD TRENTON ROAD

Dear Graduates:

The Library Department at Mercer County Community College is presently involved in a survey of its graduates from the Library Technical Assistant Program. The purpose of this study is to obtain information from persons like yourself who have graduated from the program. Twenty-eight persons were graduated from this program since its inception.

As a graduate, you can offer an objective evaluation of the effectiveness of our program. We believe you can give us first-hand information about the program. Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope within a week. All information that you can provide us will be confidential. Data will be assembled and analyzed in summary form only.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Present and future students in this program will benefit from your experience and reactions.

MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM
GRADUATED STUDENTS SURVEY

Please answer all items that do apply to you. Omit items which do not apply to you. Mark the one response that most applies.

1. At present, what is your working status: (mark one)
   ( ) working full-time.....number of hour/week____hours
   ( ) working part-time.....number of hour/week____hours
   ( ) not working.....seeking position
   ( ) not working.....not seeking position because _____.

2. What is your present employment position: (specify title and brief job description_____
   _____
   _____

3. What is the name and address of your employer?
   Name_____
   Address_____

4. When did you begin working for your present employer?
   ( ) before entering the program at MCCC
   ( ) before graduation from MCCC
   ( ) after graduating from MCCC

5. If you began working for your present employer before entering the program, did completion of our curriculum result in additional compensation of upgrading in position?
   ( ) yes
   ( ) no

6. If you are working, your present job is:
   ( ) one which was formerly held by professional librarian
   ( ) Library Technical Assistant
   ( ) Clerical or typist
   ( ) other than library field

7. According to your experience, which of the following would you prefer in training of library technical assistants?
   ( ) broad range of training in library activities
   ( ) in depth training one or more specialties

8. I would appreciate any comments about our LTA program.
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

APPENDIX D

MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

P.O. BOX B
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08690 TELEPHONE: (609) 586-4800 1200 OLD TRENTON ROAD

Dear Librarian:

I am a doctoral student at Nova University (Baltimore Cluster). For my practicum paper for the Module of Societal Factors, I have decided to make a follow-up study of Mercer County Community College Library Technical Assistant Program graduates. As a part of the study, I do need your help because one of these graduates is working in your library.

Would you please help me in this study by completing the enclosed questionnaire. It should take only five to ten minutes of your time. Please return this questionnaire within a week. All information which you provide me will be confidential. Data will be assembled and analyzed in summary form only.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and assistance. I sincerely hope that it will be of value to our profession.

Appreciatively yours,

Yong Sup (Sam) Sim
Reference Librarian

APPENDIX E

1. Do you have formally trained library technical assistant other than MCCC graduate, working in your library?

   ( ) yes ( ) no if yes, how many _____.

2. Do you believe that there will be an increased need for formally trained library technical assistants in your library?

   ( ) yes ( ) no

3. Would you recommend higher salaries for formally trained library technical assistants than for clerical staff?

   ( ) yes ( ) no

4. How would you rate the work performance of your MCCC graduate?

   ( ) excellent ( ) fair ( ) poor

5. How would you rate Mercer County Community College's training of library technical assistants?

   ( ) excellent ( ) adequate ( ) not adequate

6. In what general areas do you believe more preparation is needed?

   General education _____
   General office skills _____
   Technical library skills _____
   None _____

7. Please indicate on the following check list the duties that library technical assistants perform (or would perform) in your library.

   _____The mechanical preparation of library materials
   _____The physical upkeep of library materials
   _____Care of shelves, files, and equipment

   Circulation Procedures:

   _____Registering borrowers
   _____Explaining lending rules
   _____Reserving books for users
   _____Overdues and fines
   _____Charging and discharging books
   _____Keeping records
   _____Other

Acquisition Procedures:

_____Ordering publications (exclusive of selection)
_____Checking lists
_____Keeping records
_____Searching bibliographical data
_____Other

Cataloging Procedures:

_____Processing added copies and new editions
_____Other
_____Assigning book numbers
_____Cataloging fiction
_____Shelf-listing
_____Filing
_____Physical maintenance of catalog
_____Other

Information Services Procedures:

_____Answering directional questions or factual questions involving use of basic reference tools
_____Locating simple bibliographical information
_____Other

Other Procedures:

_____Operates audio-visual equipment
_____Simple maintenance of audio-visual equipment
_____Prepares instructional materials
_____Assists in the use of special equipment such as microfilm readers and copying machines
_____Other

8. What duties would you specifically NOT permit library technical assistants to perform?

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

9. Would you please comment in the space below concerning library technical assistants, their training programs and their utilization?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX F

MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

P.O. BOX B
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08690 TELEPHONE: (609) 586-4800 1200 OLD TRENTON ROAD

Dear Sir or Madam:

Mercer County Community College has had a Library Technical Assistant Curriculum since 1971. Prior to the institution of this curriculum a survey was taken of area libraries, and the results of the survey showed a clear need for the curriculum. For the first two years, the students were composed primarily of students who were employed in libraries and were taking those courses for refresher training and did not have an objective of achieving an Associate Degree. However, the students are now primarily composed of those seeking to enter the library field and are not presently employed in libraries. Thus, a placement problem appeared in June, 1974, with twelve students graduating. In June, 1975, five students graduated and ten students are scheduled for graduation in June, 1976.

At this time, we are conducting this survey to determine what postions are available, the salary to be paid, and possible revision of our curriculum to meet the needs of employing libraries. With this information we hope to be able to better place the graduates of our curriculum.

Would you please assist me in this endeavor by completing the enclosed questionnaire. It should take only about five to ten minutes of your time. Please return this questionnaire within a week.

Should you desire a copy of the results of the survey, I would be most happy to forward them to you.

Thank you very much for your help.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of Library_____

   Address _____

2. Type of Library:

   Public_____College/Univ_____School_____Special_____

3. Staff, present size:

   A. Professional: how many____
   B. Non-professional: how many____
   C. LTA's how many_____

   (LTA's for the purpose of this study are holders of two-year Associate Degrees with specialization in library skills and trained to function at a level between the professional and the clerk)

4. Would you hire LTA's if monies were available?

   yes _____ no _____

5. If yes, are you able to employ LTA;s at this time?

   yes _____ no _____

6. If yes, what salary would you pay them?

   Give a salary range to account for differences in the amount of experience LTA's may have.

7. Which of the following would you prefer in training of LTA's? Check preference.

   Broad range of training in library activities____
   or
   In depth training in one or more specialties_____

8. Our present curriculum has the following library courses:

   LB101 - Intro. to Library/Media Center
   LB102 - Ordering & Processing Materials
   LB201 - Helping Library Users (Reference)
   LB202 - Non Print Materials, Public Relation & Role
   LB207 - Field Experience
   VA119 - Media Workshop
   Typing and Office Skills are also included as well as traditional general educational courses.

8. continued

What courses should be added to enrich the curriculum and make the graduate more employable?

Check desired ones and add others

Foreign Languages	_____	Photography	_____
Computer Science	_____	Cinema (Motion Pictures)	_____
Maintenance and Use of AV Equipment	_____	Children's Literature	_____
Instructional Television	_____	Communication Design (Graphics)	_____
Production of Instructional Materials	_____	Mass Media	_____

Others: _____

_____

9. Please list any skills which you would like to see LTA's trained in, and which would enable them to be hired by your library.

Would you like to receive a copy of the results of this survey?

If yes, where should it be sent?

Names _____

Address _____

Thank you very much for your help.

APPENDIX H

COMMENTS FROM MCCC GRADUATES

"From my own experiences, I believe that the program should have more work experience. You cannot expect to learn everything in only one semester. There should be more concern about helping students to find jobs, not just giving promises then not following through. This causes people to have false hopes then get a letdown."

"Program was good, public awareness was poor."

"Your program enabled me to go on to Trenton State College to become a Teacher-Librarian and also get professional certification from the State." "I think it is a very good program."

"Problem is getting companys to change the job title from Library Clerk to LTA."

"I feel that the LTA program has helped me a great deal. It has helped me by showing me where to, how to look for information about library services."

"Concentrate more on specifics such as keypunching, audio visual equipment, etc."

"Very helpful"

"I believe the LTA program at MCCC is extremely valuable and informative. I wish MCCC would become a four year institution and offer a bachelors program. However, in spite of its good qualities, I find it very difficult to have my library credits transferred to another college. I just happen to feel that the program is basic, broad and completely satisfactory a great help to my work and experience. The courses <u>should be</u> acceptable and if the other institutions do not accept them then I personally feel that their justifications are unwarranted for doing so."

"I think the program is very good. My only complaint is you can't find a job in the field."

APPENDIX I

COMMENTS FROM LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

"Maintenance of rare and old documents"

"Typing, office skills, maintenance of AV equipment"

"Cannot answer-there are no present job levels for such people"

"I was unaware of your program but it does sound most valuable. I would certainly be interested in the results of your survey and to consider employment of one of your graduates."

"A small library such as ours needs a person who can do a wide variety of jobs. Many of our procedures are not standard library procedures as taught in school. We find it necessary to train our own people because of the technical nature of the library."

"Our library is too technical for an appropriate reply."

"Simple cataloging, production of catalog cards, simple reference--especially use of periodical indexes"

"Broad range training would be essential"

"Ability to recognize foreign languages, not read the language and words"

Some form of ready reference work"

"Circulation procedures of various kinds"

"Science training as well as library skills"

"Bookkeeping and record keeping"

"Not a skill, perhaps, but empathy for the patrons is especially helpful---."

"Since most of our library's functions concern direct dealing with the public, it would be advantageous to have personnel trained to meet, greet and deal with patrons on numerous levels. Perhaps some exposure to role-playing situations would be helpful. It would also be helpful to have all library personnel knowledgeable of the requirements for funding from the state and the legal responsibilities of the library and liabilities it may face."

"U. S. History"

"Operation of AV equipment and ability to conduct pre-school story hour programs"

"Unfortunately N J Civil Service does not recognize the para-professional or library technician but it may give some additional useful skills for people already in employ."

"Communication and public speaking"

"Cable T V productions"

"AV area"

"Current popular literature knowledge"

"Sign making, displays, simple library equipment repairs"

"Basic reading, writing and numerical skills."

"Positive attitude toward service to the public"

"I am not in favor of these programs, because they cover M.L.S. courses and are misleading to students. I prefer to train our own clerks"

"Aids in storytelling and programming (small)"

"I would hire for most non-professional jobs from the general labor pool for clerical workers. Naturally, I'd prefer proven library experience, but I don't see a person with LTA as much different from that. Your program might be particularly interesting to me, however, when hiring for an AV technician position."

"In a community of this size (15,000 pop), there is a constant supply of mothers who enjoy a part-time outside job. They are sharp, dedicated and very educable. For summer replacement, there are college students. It is economically and politically better for a library withmany budget limitations to use these sources for non-professional help."

COMMENTS FROM LOCAL SCHOOL LIBRARIES

"Typing and cataloging production"

"Use of AV equipment"

"Video production"

"Graphic production"

"Primary level maintenance and use of AV equipment"

"Production of instructional materials"

"The LTA has to be able to assist the professional in the detail work such as pulling cards, typing lists, cataloging books that the librarian does not have time to do"

"Skills related to managing media centers"

"Repair of print and non-print materials"

"The greatest need is a good typing ability with knowlege of books"

"Ability to work with children"

APPENDIX K

COMMENTS FROM LOCAL SPECIAL LIBRARIES

"Creative library programming to increase library functions"

"Basic Catalogical Skills, ALA filing rules-skills"

"Scientific and business reference sources"

"Typing is essential"

"Reference, Cataloging (typing skills needed), media management"

"ALA filing skills, typing, use of card catalog, working knowledge of basic indexes and statistical sources."

"Typing"

"Searching skill, good typing-not rapid but accurate, a willingness to do any task"

"LTA's would be in clerical positions so good clerical skills would have to be considered formost. In small, special libraries clerical functions are extremely important and good clerical help is hard to find. The problems of advancement are difficult, however, because of the small size of the staff."

"Process of book mending and maintenance."

"Filing skills"

"Searching skills"

"Our library is so specialized and unique that we prefer to train our own personnel. We are completely electronic equipment oriented"

"Our library is primarily science oriented-a course in science would be beneficiary for a special library such as this"

"The role of the medical LTA"

"Medical terminology"

APPENDIX L

COMMENTS FROM LOCAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

"Achieve maintenance"

"Special collections"

"Public relations"

"AV software organization and simple material production"

"Cataloging - this is the best field I feel you can enter"

"Maintenance and use of AV equipment"

"Circulation systems"

"A general understanding that print and non-print resources should be considered simultaneously in collection development and reader service"

"Filing card catalog"

"Inter-library loan procedures"

"Broad experience with the print and non-print media and basic experience with AV and video equipment and production"

"Knowledge of pre-cataloging (preparing materials for professional cataloging staff)"

"Clerical as well as subprofessional skills. Familiarity with cataloging and classification, shelving and filing etc. would be helpful"

"Some knowledge of all library/media functions since a small library means LTA's would be doing a wide variety of jobs"